



News Release

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Youth Mark Great American Smokeout[®] with Body Bags

SALT LAKE CITY – Utah’s youth anti-tobacco revolution, the Phoenix Alliance, marked the Great American Smokeout[®] by carrying body bags up and down Salt Lake City’s Main Street. The group did so to urge tobacco users to set aside tobacco products for the day to say no to the tobacco industry’s manipulation. Fifty body bags were used to symbolize the 50 deaths that are caused by tobacco products every hour across the nation.

“I was surprised to see teenagers carrying body bags around when I got on TRAX to head home from work,” says Nick Sanders, TRAX rider. “It is shocking that 50 people die every hour from using tobacco products.”

This year, the youth group is spreading the word about tactics the smokeless tobacco industry uses to infiltrate Utah’s college and university campuses. The campaign is called “Don’t Buy Their Bull.” More than 1,700 people have signed in support of the campaign since it was launched in October.

“We chose ‘Don’t Buy Their Bull’ as this year’s initiative because of the tobacco companies’ aggressive efforts to market smokeless tobacco products to young people,” says Whitney Rutt, Phoenix Alliance president. “Big tobacco sees us as potential replacements for the 1,200 tobacco users who die every day from their deadly habit.”

The Great American Smokeout[®] is held annually on the third Thursday of November to encourage smokers to quit tobacco for a day—in the hope they will quit for good. Other teen groups, including Salt Lake Valley Health Department’s Teen Advocates Against

Tobacco, Utah County Outrage, Weber-Morgan Health Department's Governing Youth Council, Comunidades Unidas and the Pacific Islander Ethnic Network, joined the Phoenix Alliance in marking the event.

Every 72 seconds someone dies of a smoking related disease. The Phoenix Alliance works to educate the public to "see through the smoke" and not be manipulated by the tobacco industry. Cigarettes contain 500 dangerous chemicals, including ammonia, arsenic and carbon monoxide. More than 50 of these chemicals cause cancer. For more information, or to join the Phoenix Alliance, visit www.utahphoenixalliance.org.

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